

Gravedigger

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Summary: A short-short on Batman's future

Gravedigger

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There is a legend in Gotham, now, in these days in which all legends have passed away but one. He is called Gravedigger, and he walks among the stones. He is tall, his shoulders broad, but his face is hidden, his form enshrouded blackly in the twilight dusk. They say he walks the night, slowly, walks that thin line of darkness, strung together with shots and the screams of women in the night.

The city is crumbling.

The heros are gone.

But Gravedigger walks in the night.

He will stand over your grave, they say, when you are gone-- for indeed, you will one day go. It may be tomorrow; it may be next year; it may be tonight. But you will go. By shot, by blade, by rope-- you will go. And he will stand, they tell the children in the night-- he will stand at the end of the mound of dirt, no headstone, where your feet will lie in the earth, and he will hold vigil, a moment or two; perhaps more, if the night is young, and then will move on, to the next, and next, who are, perhaps, your friends.

Do not try, if you see him, they say, to speak to him, or even come near. If he is not mad, he is a ghost, and at a word, a sound, a footstep, he will vanish into the black. And then, who will stand over *your* grave?

Yet some say they have listened-- those with soft footsteps, and fleeting minds-- listened in the night as he stands, and moves, and stands again, listened to the words he speaks, lowly, in a deep and

murmuring voice.

"I was the first, and I am the last," they have heard him say. "I was the chosen, I was the cursed. I lead the march, and now I trail the funeral procession. You are one more, a life, a world-- and your blood is on my hands. Rest you now, and let your burdens be mine."

And sometimes, those that say these things, those who tell the story, call him not Gravedigger, as others do, but Penance.

And the old ones, in their hearts, whisper, but do not say, "Batman."

Hey folks, thanks for reading! A review would be appreciated, and if you liked this, check out my 'Perspectives' series; there will eventually be five-- right now I've got two posted, with more to come.

Thanks again-- --Haydee

End
file.